What is claimed is:

1. A computerized system comprising:

a channel console to provide a user interface to create one or more channels, each one of the channels comprising a list of one or more targets and one or more tasks assigned to each one of the targets, and to create deployment instructions comprising a location for each one of the tasks wherein at least one of the tasks is stored in a different location than the channel;

a channel server to maintain the one or more channels and the deployment instructions; and

one or more channel clients to perform the tasks assigned to the targets.

2. The computerized system of claim 1, further comprising a channel database to store the one or more channels and the deployment instructions.

3. The computerized system of claim 1, wherein the one or more targets comprise computers.

4. The computerized system of claim 1, wherein the one or more targets comprise groups.

5. The computerized system of claim 1, wherein the one or more targets comprise one or more users.

6. The computerized system of claim 1, wherein the different location is a file server.

7. The computerized system of claim 1, wherein the different location is an Internet server.

8. The computerized system of claim 1, wherein the different location is one of the channel clients.

9. The computerized system of claim 1, wherein the different location is identified by a variable.

10. The computerized system of claim 9, wherein the variable has a different value from one channel client to another.

11. The computerized system of claim 1, wherein the channel client is identified by a computer name.

12. The computerized system of claim 1, wherein the channel client is identified by a TCP/IP address.

13. The computerized system of claim 1, wherein the channel client is identified by a uniform resource locator.

14. The computerized system of claim 1, wherein the targets are directly connected to a TCP/IP network.

15. A computer-readable medium having computer executable instructions comprising:

a channel console component to provide a user interface to create one or more channels comprising a list of targets and tasks; and

a channel server component to store the one or more channels wherein at least one of the tasks is stored in a different location than the channel, and the channel server component to provide deployment instructions for the tasks in the one or more channels.

16. The computer-readable medium of claim 15, further comprising a channel client component to execute on each one of the targets and to perform the tasks assigned to the targets.

17. The computer-readable medium of claim 15, wherein the list of targets comprise computers.

18. The computer-readable medium of claim 15, wherein the list of targets comprise users.

19. The computer-readable medium of claim 15, wherein the list of targets comprise groups.

20. The computer-readable medium of claim 15, wherein the list of targets comprise containers.

21. The computer-readable medium of claim 15, wherein the list of tasks comprise packages, scripts and commands.

22. A computerized method comprising:

creating a channel for distributing software, the channel comprising a list of one or more targets and one or more tasks assigned to the target;

storing the channel in a first location;

defining deployment instructions for the one or more tasks, the deployment instructions comprising a schedule for performing the task and a second location for each task wherein the second location for at least one task is different than the first location; and

distributing software by performing the tasks assigned to the targets according to the deployment instructions.

23. A computer-readable medium having computer executable instructions comprising:

a channel client component to receive tasks assigned to one or more channels, and the channel client component to perform the task without creating a temporary copy of the software on the target computer.

24. A computerized method comprising:

receiving instructions for distributing software to the one or more target computers; and

creating at least one channel to distribute the software to the one or more target computers according to the instructions without creating a temporary copy of the software on the target computer.

25. The computerized system of claim 24, wherein the instructions comprise a schedule for distributing the software.

26. The computerized system of claim 24, wherein the instructions comprise a location for the software to be distributed.

27. The computerized system of claim 24, wherein the instructions comprise a uniform resource locator identifying the location for the software to be distributed.

28. A computerized method comprising:

receiving, by a channel server, a request from a target for one or more deployment instructions for a channel;

determining, by the channel server , if the target is associated with one or more groups;

if the target is associated with one or more groups, then determining if the one or more groups are defined by the channel server and defining each one of the groups not defined by the channel server;

determining, by the channel server, if the target is defined by the channel server and defining the target if the target is not defined by the channel server; and

adding, by the channel server, the target to each one of the groups.

29. The computerized method of claim 28, wherein the one or more groups have a hierarchical relationship, and adding the target to each one of the groups is performed by adding the target to the top-most group.

30. The computerized method of claim 28, wherein determining if the target is associated with one or more groups is performed by analyzing the X.500 identification for the target.

31. The computerized method of claim 28, wherein determining if the target is associated with one or more groups is performed by analyzing Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) identification for the target.

32. The computerized method of claim 28, wherein the targets are selected from the group consisting of: computers, users and groups.

33. The computerized method of claim 28, wherein the target is defined based on a channel client environment variable setting.

34. A computer readable medium having computer executable instructions for executing a method of distributing software, the method comprising:

creating at least one channel to distribute the software to one or more targets;

receiving a request from one of the targets for software;

automatically adding the target to the channel; and

distributing software to the target according to the channel.

35. The computer readable medium of claim 34, further comprising automatically adding the target to one or more groups.

36. The computer readable medium of claim 36, wherein automatically adding the target to one or more groups further comprises creating one or more groups.

37. The computer readable medium of claim 36, wherein the one or more groups are created based on one or more network containers defined as part of a directory services identification for the target.

38. The computer readable medium of claim 37, wherein the directory services structure is Novell Directory Services.

39. The computer readable medium of claim 37, wherein the directory services structure is Active Directory.

40. An apparatus comprising:

a memory;

a central processing unit; and

computer executable instructions executed by the central processing unit from the memory to create a channel comprising a list of tasks and deployment instructions for the tasks and to automatically add a computer to the channel upon receiving a request from the computer for deployment instructions.

41. The apparatus of claim 40, further comprising computer executable instructions to automatically create one or more groups.

42. The apparatus of claim 41, further comprising computer executable instructions to automatically add the computer to one or more groups.

43. The apparatus of claim 42, wherein the one or more groups are created based on one or more network containers defined as part of a directory services structure for the computer.

44. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the directory services structure is Novell Directory Services.

45. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the directory services structure is Active Directory.

46. The apparatus of claim 40, wherein the computer executable instructions to automatically add a computer to the channel further comprise computer executable instructions to define the computer based on an environment variable setting of the computer.

47. A computerized method comprising:

creating, by a channel server, a channel comprising a list of one or more channel clients and one or more tasks assigned to each one of the channel clients;

receiving, by each one of the channel clients from the channel server, installation files for the channel client component;

receiving, by each one of the channel clients from the channel server, installation files for a service;

installing, by each one of the channel clients , the installation files for the channel client component and the installation files for the service; and

requesting, by the channel client from the channel server, one or more tasks for deployment on the channel client.

48. The computerized method of claim 47, wherein the channel client performs the actions of receiving through a direct network connection with the channel server.

49. The computerized method of claim 47, wherein the channel client performs the actions of receiving through a subscription file.

50. The computerized method of claim 49, wherein the subscription file is received by e-mail.

51. The computerized method of claim 49, wherein the subscription file is received through a web page.

52. The computerized method of claim 49, wherein the subscription file is received through a login script.

53. The computerized method of claim 47, further comprising automatically contacting the channel server by the channel client to receive software.

54. A computer readable medium having computer executable instructions for performing the method of claim 47.

55. An apparatus comprising:

a memory;

a central processing unit; and

computer executable instructions executed by the central processing unit from the memory to create a channel comprising a list of tasks and deployment instructions for the tasks and to provide a first file to install a channel client component on the target computer and to provide a second file to install a service on the target computer wherein one or more of the first file and the second file are provided to the target computer over a network.

56. The apparatus of claim 55, wherein the second file allows the channel client component to be installed without a user logged on to the target computer.

57. The apparatus of claim 55, wherein second file allows one or more channel client components to be installed on a target computer regardless of the user's permissions.

58. An apparatus comprising:

a memory;

a central processing unit; and

computer executable instructions executed by the central processing unit from the memory to create a channel comprising a list of tasks and deployment instructions for the tasks and to provide a first file to install a channel client component on the target computer and to provide a second file to install a service on the target computer wherein one or more of the first file and the second file are provided to the target computer through a subscription file.

59. The apparatus of claim 58, wherein the second file allows the channel client component to be installed without a user logged on to the target computer.

60. The apparatus of claim 58, wherein the second file allows one or more channel client components to be installed on a target computer regardless of the user's permissions.